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Commission for Social Development
Forty-fifth session
7-16 February 2007
Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: promoting full employment and decent work for all

Statement submitted by 8th Day Center for Justice and VIVAT International, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 2006.

* E/CN.5/2007/1.

06-63601 (E) 201206

Statement

1. Extreme poverty is still a stark reality that hundreds of millions of people live. Our experience tells that one of the main causes of extreme poverty is the lack of decent work. The theme: "Promoting full employment and decent work for all" is both timely and relevant. Providing decent work for all is one of the keys to eradicating extreme poverty.

2. This is affirmed by the report of the Secretary General submitted to the Sixtieth session of the General Assembly "The Centrality of Employment to Poverty Eradication" which said in its recommendation, "Arguably, the best anti-poverty programme is employment and the best route to socio-economic development and personal wellbeing is through decent work". (A/60/314 para 67)

3. The target of decent work for all has been integrated into Millennium Development Goal 1: "to make the goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including for women and young people, a central objective of our relevant national and international policies and our national development strategies". Although there has been some progress made in creating job opportunities, there is a lot left to be implemented. The United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, asked in his report, "If history judges 2005 for its promises, then 2006 must be judged on implementation. Are we on course to look back, in 2015, and say that no effort was spared?" (A/61/1 para 27)

4. We are concerned especially about the plight of the extremely poor: indigenous peoples, women, youth, urban poor, persons living with HIV/AIDS and refugees.

- Decent work for the extremely poor is scarce where they live.
- The extremely poor enjoy very few social protections.
- The extremely poor cannot afford basic education nor are given adequate skills training to qualify for decent work.
- The extremely poor not only lack access to the necessary social, cultural and political networks that empower them to free themselves from the shackles of poverty but the system deprives them of opportunities for economic development.

5. Our experience shows providing decent work to the extremely poor is not only necessary; it can be done. VIVAT has focused on people-centered development by empowerment and capacity building programs, especially for indigenous peoples, women, youth, persons living with HIV/AIDS and urban poor. Job opportunities were created through micro-credit/finance and other self-help projects, and established centers for education and skills training for the socially disadvantaged. 8th Day Center for Justice works with several coalitions on issues that promote full employment and human rights standards.

6. Good Practices:

1. Center for Middle Education for Adults (CEMA): Batallas near the shores of Lake Titicaca, Bolivia, VIVAT members are responsible for the administration of two educational centers,

Center for Middle Education for Adults (CEMA) and Bolivian Institute of Learning (IBA) which are types of Alternative Education. CEMA offers Primary Education of Adults (EPA) beginning with basics in reading and writing to finishing with a certificate of Secondary Education for Adults (ESA). IBA offers Technical Education for Adults (ETA) in commercial and manual technical arts, giving the students the opportunity to be certified as Qualified Operator to Auxiliary Technicians. Courses offered are Basics in Computers, Secretarial, Typing, Accounting, Poultry Raising, Macramé, Hand and Machine Weaving, Painting on Cloth, Hair Styling, Cosmetology, and Web Page Design. They receive certification in one or two years depending on the course. Formation/education of women is prioritized. The center is located where they live. This work is carried out in the indigenous communities that belong to Batallas (Kanapata, Igachi, Catacora, Huancane, Karwiz, Suriquina, Puerto Perez, Carcoma Distrito Laja).

2. 8th Day center for Justice works with coalitions over issues, which include ICCR (Inter-faith Center for Corporate Responsibility) over fair codes and ethics of corporations in regards to women and minority groups in the workforce. Other coalitions we work with are: Jobs with Justice (employment issues) and Chicago Fair Trade (works to increase fair trade in the Chicago metro area through education and advocacy); and Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign (committed to unite people living in poverty across color lines in order to abolish poverty).

7. In the Millennium Declaration of 2000 (General Assembly resolution 55/2), world leaders committed themselves "to spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty". **We recommend the following to end extreme poverty.**

1. **Prioritize and incorporate education for the underprivileged and marginalized in all relevant international policies and national development strategies.**
2. **Condone external debt, especially for LDCs. This will give them enough fiscal space to meet the social needs of their citizens.**
3. **VIVAT continues to appeal to Governments of developing countries, and especially the LDCs, to make decent work for all a clear objective of policymaking as the ILO urged and guarantee social protection for the poor.**
4. **End armed conflict especially in Africa as it only exacerbates the problems of extreme poverty.**
5. **Make health and access to affordable medicines a priority in national development strategies.**
6. **Support self-help projects, micro-credit/finance and cooperatives, especially for women.**
7. **Support technical skills training and capacity building programs to empower the poor, women, disabled and indigenous peoples.**

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Item 3 (b) of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: review of relevant United Nations plans and programmes of action pertaining to the situation of social groups

Statement submitted by American Psychological Association and International Council of Psychologists, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

* E/CN.5/2007/1.

06-63507 (E) 190107

Statement

1. This 45th Session of the Commission for Social Development will initiate the first review and appraisal of the 2002 Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, a major milestone in bringing ageing issues to the forefront of the international agenda. We have been pleased that over the past five years many governments have undertaken actions to achieve the objectives set forth in the Madrid Plan. However, given the inexorable demographic revolution that has begun and will affect all nations as their populations age, much more needs to be done. With the number of persons age 60 and older expected to quadruple between 2000 and 2050 to nearly 2 billion, it is critical that we recognize that specific actions must be taken by governments to ensure that the goals of the Madrid Plan are achieved worldwide.

2. We recognize and support the need for flexibility in addressing the Plan's goals, not only from country to country but also within countries, understanding that each nation faces different opportunities and challenges and must, therefore, set different priorities. But whatever path is taken, the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing must remain the fundamental blueprint. Its goals must be every nation's goals.

3. To this end, we believe that is critical that all governments support the development of the "bottom-up" approach to assessing the specific needs of older persons in their societies, designing policies and programs to meet those needs, and then appraising the effectiveness of those actions. We urge that the establishment of partnerships among governments, non-governmental organizations, academia and the private sector, with significant participation of older persons, be an integral component of this process.

4. To assist countries lacking the internal capacity to implement either the Madrid Plan or this review process, we recommend that sufficient funding of the UN Trust Fund for Ageing be made to expand the capability of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to provide such assistance as is requested.

5. With respect to the theme of this 45th Session, "full employment and decent work for all", we wish to remind governments that when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights declares, "Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment", older persons are included in "Everyone" and that one key objective of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing is "Employment opportunities for all older persons who want to work." Realistically, this will only come to pass when nations and regions mainstream ageing in their development and poverty eradication strategies. We call upon all governments to mainstream ageing not just in this area but in all their social and economic policies and programs.

6. Ultimately it is governments that must act on the commitments they make at international conferences. This was affirmed by the 166 Member States attending the Second World Assembly on Ageing in Madrid five years ago in Article 17 of their Political Declaration in which they recognized

their "primary responsibility for providing leadership on ageing issues". We in the NGO community stand ready to assist you in implementing the Madrid Plan and this review and appraisal process.

7. **Finally, we ask that you recall a statement made at the 43rd Session of this Commission: "The potential for older persons is a powerful basis for future development – enabling society to rely increasingly on the skills, experience and wisdom of older persons not only to take the lead in their own betterment but also to participate actively in that of society as a whole."**

Note:

Statement submitted on behalf of the NGO Committee on Ageing, an international network of more than 60 organizations working to raise world awareness of the opportunities and challenges of global ageing.

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Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: promoting full employment and decent work for all

Statement submitted by the Elizabeth Seton Federation, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 2006.

* E/CN.5/2007/1.

06-63779 (E) 181206

Statement

1. In consideration of the theme: Full Employment and Decent Work for All, during the forty-fifth session of the Commission on Social Development, NGOs endorsing this statement offer the following for consideration:

2. Presently many states are in transition from a war situation after having signed peace accords following wars or conflicts. The conditions of their citizens require astute, multi-faceted planning and cooperation at all levels of society to achieve "Full Employment and Decent Work for All."

3. In Latin America and Africa there are states in which entire generations never learned to live productively in a peaceful environment:

- Families forced to migrate or live in refugee camps.
- Children obligated to serve as soldiers.

4. The war contributed to establishing cultures of violence, hatred, fear and hopelessness. Crime is part of life, especially for young people who were born during the war. They never knew conditions of dignity, respect, or consideration of human rights.

5. To bring "Full Employment and Decent Work for All," we should review experiences and formulate strategies and action plans to implement goal #25 of the World Summit for Social Development, the Copenhagen Declaration.

> We the heads of state and Government are committed to political, economic, ethical and spiritual vision for social development based on human dignity, human rights equality, respect, peace, democracy, mutual responsibility and cooperation, full respect for various religious and ethical values and cultural backgrounds of people. Accordingly, we will give the highest priority in national, regional, and international policies and actions, based on full participation by all.[1]

6. Former Secretary General Kofi Annan summed up the present inertia of states and governments on many issues and situations:

> We all know what the problems are, and we all know what we have promised to achieve. What we need now is not more declarations or promises but—action, action to fulfill the promises already made.[2]

7. At this moment there is need for strategies and action plans to "promote social programs, justice and the betterment of the human condition with full participation by all."[3] It is urgent to restore peace in countries that have known war and violence. The international community must be actively involved in restoring a culture of forgiveness and reconciliation that includes the possibility of "Full Employment and Decent Work for All."

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1 World Summit for social Development, Copenhagen Declaration—Part B #25

2 Annan, Kofi, 60th Anniversary of UN General Assembly Ministerial Meeting 9/2005

3 Ibid, Annan

8. Nearly 1 billion people belong to groups subject to exclusion. This is both shameful and intolerable. All people want the right to speak, choose and act on their own behalf. The lesson is clear, succeeding is not simply a question of legislative and policy changes. Constitutions and legislation that provide protections and guarantees for minorities, indigenous groups and other groups are a critical foundation for broader freedoms.[4]

9. Participation welcomes and respects people; it builds capacity and affords education and training to allow development of a peaceful economic system. Several countries have worked to establish forgiveness, healing of the memories and reconciliation; few, however, have established practical programs to promote and train the unemployed and unskilled to prepare for productive work.

10. South Africa is an example of good practice in this area: During the Presidency of Nelson Mandela, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission allowed South Africans to come to terms with the trauma of Apartheid and to move toward becoming a productive society and country. After the Truth and Reconciliation Commission ended its work in 1997 and published its report in 2003, there were still many who had not been able to tell their story. This was made possible through the establishment of The Institute for Healing of Memories in Cape Town, South Africa. Father Michael Lapsley, who had lost both hands and one eye from a letter bomb in 1990, established the Institute to give persons and groups the opportunity to have their experiences told and acknowledged; to this date, the Institute for Healing of Memories has offered workshops to individuals and groups throughout South Africa, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, USA, Britain, Australia and Ireland.[5]

11. Recent news articles highlighting forgiveness and reconciliation have come from Rwanda where in some coffee producing regions to get the beans grown, harvested and processed both killer and victims from the genocide are striking an uneasy peace born of economic co-dependence. "They need each other to make that container of coffee" says Timothy Schilling, a coffee consultant referring to steel shipping containers that are packed with beans and shipped overseas.[6] Jeanette, a Tutsi woman who lost husband, parents and children in the genocide, hired several Hutus to assist her with her coffee farm.

12. In Uganda the terrorists are welcomed back. Some 400 former rebels gathered beneath a "blessing tree" for a ritual that welcomed them back to their community. The ex-rebels stepped on an egg symbolizing breaking open a new life and restoring their innocence. There is even talk in Uganda of reconciling with Kony, the LRA chief who ordered some 200,000 civilian deaths.[7]

13. Similar stories of reconciliation have come from Burundi and Liberia. Truth and Reconciliation Commissions have functioned in Peru, Morocco and Sierra Leone to mention just a few. According to Pierre Hazan, United States Institute of Peace, despite limitations the IER (Instance Equite et Reconciliation), provides a road map to further democratization and

4 Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World, UNDP, 2004.

5 Lapsley Michael, Institute for Healing of Memories, Origins of Workshop Methodology, www.healingofmemories.co.za

6 McLaughlin, Abraham, *Africa After War: Why Jeannette Employs her Family's killer*, The Christian Science Monitor 10/24/06.

7 McLaughlin, Abraham, Africa After War: Paths to Forgiveness Paths to Forgiveness-Ugandans Welcome Terrorists Back, The Christian Science Monitor 10/23/06.

provides a positive model for social and political reforms in the rest of the Arab world and encourages local and international players to support such reforms.

14. Yet, these countries all have to find creative and new ways of helping its citizens' transition from war to peace by a thorough program of employment training and creation. A recent model of employment and development comes from The Table Mountain National Park project in Cape Town, South Africa. The project, an expansion of a public works program, employs some 420 long term-unemployed persons in developing new hiking trails, protecting the bio-diversity and boosting the economy by inviting regional tourism. This program provides ongoing education and development. Participants receive diplomas that are recognized throughout the country. Mathe was unemployed for a long time…her training and experience have provided her with extensive knowledge of safety, first aid, navigation, geology and history. The experience has made her an assertive person who is determined to explore the opportunities offered in South Africa's booming tourist industry.[8]

15. **We believe that:**

- **Countries moving from war and conflict to a culture of peace will benefit from transitional justice processes incorporating forgiveness, healing and reconciliation both public and private. A moral and historical framework must underpin these processes so that all peoples in the country may be touched in a manner with which they are able to identify.**
- **These processes must be incorporated at every level of government but the main burden falls within the national level. Governments must recognize and honestly acknowledge their part in the war and conflict.**
- **There are many models of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions.**
- **Peace Institutes and Universities, forgiveness, healing and reconciliation programs provide necessary mechanisms for people who have been enemies to work through anger, fear and bitterness. People need to be able to just get along.**
- **Full employment, education and work skills are necessary and should run parallel with forgiveness and healing processes.**

Note:

Statement endorsed and supported by the following non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council: Brothers of Charity, Congregations of St. Joseph, Dominican Leadership Conference, International Association of Charities, International Presentation Association of the Sisters of the Presentation, International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Soroptimist International and UNANIMA International

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8 Bos, Thessa, "*Mountain Trails Open Paths for Unemployment,*" Inter Press Service News Agency, October 16, 2006, www.ipsnews.net.

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Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: promoting full employment and decent work for all

Statement submitted by International Movement ATD Fourth World, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 2006.

* E/CN.5/2007/1.

06-63848 (E) 191206

Statement

Background

1. In Copenhagen in 1995, Governments agreed that the eradication of poverty, expansion of productive employment and reduction of unemployment, and social integration are the three pillars of social development. However, the persistence of poverty and social exclusion continues to have a serious impact on the achievement of full employment. Social exclusion, as a manifestation of extreme poverty, means that many initiatives to increase employment do not positively impact the poorest members of society.

2. The founder of the International Movement ATD Fourth World, Joseph Wresinski, defined extreme poverty as follows: "A lack of basic security is the absence of one or more factors that enable individuals and families to assume professional, family and social responsibilities and to enjoy fundamental rights. Such a situation may become more extended and lead to more serious and permanent consequences. Extreme poverty results when the lack of basic security simultaneously affects several aspects of people's lives, when it is prolonged and when it severely compromises people's chances of regaining their rights and of reassuming their responsibility in the foreseeable future."[1]

3. Employment is a major route for people to obtain security and participate in and contribute to society. Wresinski said that "In today's society, the principal security of individuals and families is employment and it determines, to a large extent, whether people have basic security in other fields. Disadvantaged people are no different in wanting security of a job."[2]

4. Those living in extreme poverty should be at the heart of all efforts to eradicate poverty and their wishes and expectations for themselves and their families should be taken into account. When the most excluded people contribute their knowledge and experience to society as equals, extreme poverty can start to be overcome.

5. The International Movement ATD Fourth World hopes that the Commission for Social Development will address the issue of reaching those living in extreme poverty by calling for the development of inclusive employment programmes that prioritize access for the poorest.

Challenges from the field

6. The work that many people living in poverty do is often invisible to wider society, and considered to have little value. This can adversely impact anti-poverty efforts. In East Africa, a local government and an international donor, replaced an open fish market with a modern market building that now houses the vendors and some local services. Although a consultation was completed, certain groups of workers within the market were not visible and therefore not taken into account in

[1] Report presented by Leandro Despouy to the Subcommission on the Prevention of Discrimination Measures and Protection of Minorities. United Nations, Geneva (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1996/13), Annex III.

[2] Wresinski, J. (1987). Grande Pauvreté et Précarité Economique et Sociale. (Chronic Poverty and Lack of Basic Security. Translation and Introduction 1994 by New/Fourth World Movement), p. 71.

the planning. Many of the youths who did odd jobs at the market, as well as other very poor market workers, were excluded from the new market. Their poverty and social exclusion led not only to a failure for them to benefit from this change, but actually eliminated their livelihood.

7. Experiences such as this demonstrate that there are many obstacles faced by the poorest in their efforts to engage in employment. The social stigma of poverty, daily shame, and humiliation are important factors. A low skill base or lack of recognition of unofficial skills in competitive labour markets also adds to "the poverty trap" in which the poorest often find themselves. Living in a difficult environment that lacks infrastructure and on the "fringes" of society, is another factor limiting access to employment opportunities. Several years ago families living close to the central market in a Central American City were relocated from living alongside the railway track which was located next to the market. They now find themselves much further away from the market and their means of subsistence.[3] This dislocation had serious implications not just in terms of work, but also for the well-being of the families in general.

Good practices

8. Innovative projects can build confidence, trust and the skill base of excluded people to be better prepared to obtain more stable employment and improved working conditions. In France a project created in 2002 called "Travailler et Apprendre Ensemble[4] (T.A.E.)" — (Work and Learn Together) stresses the priority of work as a space for independence for very excluded people who, due to the tremendous pressures of living in poverty, need extra support and time to regain confidence in themselves and their ability to work again. TAE is sensitive to the different needs and learning rhythms of each person. Besides learning practical skills such as computer reconditioning, cleaning and building maintenance, TAE employees learn to work in teams and acquire other important employment skills. TAE also works with other organizations and employees to develop employment policies that take into account people and their competencies, not just their resumes.

9. Another theme related to employment opportunities for the most excluded is that of Information Technology (IT). Rapid technological advancements are becoming a serious barrier not only in the workplace but also in society at large. Very poor and excluded people struggle to keep up, unless there is a real effort to support them. In Madagascar in 2006 the International Movement ATD Fourth World signed an agreement[5] with two major telecommunication companies to provide Internet access to youths and craftsmen for them to develop their crafts business and sell online. This initiative aims at creating stable and decent work for the most excluded people, and requires the long-term support of committed individuals to ensure that the project remains truly inclusive for those with the most difficulties.

[3] How Poverty Separates Parents and Children: A Challenge to Human Rights Quart Monde Editions, Mery sur Oise, 2004, published in English and French, page 28.

[4] For more information see www.tae-asso.org

[5] For more information see http://www.alcatel.fr/sustainable/DigitalBridge/index.htm

Dignity

10. People living in poverty find dignity in work that may not be evident to others, because this work gives them an opportunity to imagine a future for themselves and their children. A woman from Central America testified on October 17, 2006, "I work in a landfill, separating the recyclables from the garbage. In this work there are many risks. In January there was an accident, when a landslide of garbage buried and killed eight people: their bodies could not be recovered. In spite of this, I don't feel like less of a person, because I am working for the future of my children." Employment is a source of security, social integration, and dignity for the poorest. Members of the International Movement ATD Fourth World who are living in extreme poverty, said that "When you have a job, it gives confidence in yourself", "They despise you if you don't work. At school children are ashamed to admit that their father has no job."

11. Periods of unemployment demoralize and further marginalize people, aggravating their despair and mistrust in society. Wresinski insisted that periods of unemployment should not be wasted. "Security [in periods of non-employment] is necessary for the poorest not only to improve their skills in fields of their choice, but also to be part of cultural enrichment, thus preparing themselves for inventing completely new areas of activity".[6] A "culture of work" may disappear because of long periods of idleness. Therefore, living in poverty undermines the ability of people to assume the basic responsibilities needed to fully participate in employment.

12. The International Movement ATD Fourth World notes that in Europe government employment agencies geared at helping people find work are often seen negatively by excluded people, who have lost confidence in the system. Efforts should be made to overcome this mistrust and rebuild confidence in both employment institutions and the people that they are supporting. Even if very excluded people obtain employment, most often it is an irregular job, with low pay, with long or night shifts, and with few or absent associated benefits. These jobs lack elements of decent work that could provide families with enough resources to live in dignity.

Recommendations

13. Through the experience of the work of the International Movement ATD Fourth World alongside people living in poverty in developing inclusive employment programmes, the following are recommendations are made:

Supporting the poor in returning to the labour market requires a sustained and long-term effort. Where possible, programmes should be long term since improving the access of people living in poverty to employment requires meaningful capacity-building. Additional support is required to help people to tackle personal and family challenges, and effectively assume job responsibilities. In traditional employment programmes and agencies, success is often measured by numbers of people trained and placed into jobs. There is a tendency in such programmes to select the strongest and potentially employable participants, excluding the more "difficult" ones. Employment programmes

[6] DESA and ATD Fourth World (December, 1999). Redefining human-rights based development: the Wresinski approach to partnership with the poorest. ESA/DSPD/BP3

must prioritize the most excluded, and include them in the evaluation of such programmes. These programmes need time to be evaluated for achievements if there are to be long-term positive outcomes.

Employment should not be given in the form of charity or enforced. People living in extreme poverty need security and genuine participation in society. Efforts are needed to influence employers, governments and agencies as they work towards truly inclusive employment. Policies should be developed that include the most excluded in a dignified manner and builds on what they have to contribute. "Nobody should be forced to accept just any job or other activity for the only reason that there is no choice. (...) the poorest fear the emergence of a new form of forced labour."[7] Efforts should be made to avoid enclosing the most excluded in "special" work programmes which separate them from the rest of economy and society.

Finally, globally, labour markets are becoming more competitive, leaving fewer labour-intensive jobs. Both the formal and informal sectors are an important source of employment, but low minimum wages remain a problem for the "working poor". Improving working conditions in both sectors, maintaining and creating labour-intensive jobs, and securing decent work for all people, and especially for the most excluded, are parts of this global challenge. The international community and all countries should therefore evaluate the impact of overall employment policies and economic growth from the perspective of the lives of the most excluded and to promote social cohesion.

Access to decent, safe and fulfilling work is fundamental to the achievement of social development, and people in poverty are the first actors in efforts to secure dignified work. Their daily efforts should be harnessed and supported, and their experiences capitalized on, to develop long-term, inclusive and harmonious employment for all.

[7] Furrer, H., Blunschi, M., et al. (May, 2005). Integration and social cohesion. The ATD Fourth World approach: the experience and expectations of the poorest as the paradigmatic model for the struggle for integration and social cohesion. By ATD Fourth World, Lucerne, Switzerland.

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Statement submitted by American Psychological Association, Brothers of Charity, Congregations of St. Joseph, Elizabeth Seton Federation, International Association of Charities, International Federation on Ageing, International Presentation Association of Sisters of the Presentation, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries and UNANIMA International, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 2006.

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Statement

1. We, the above mentioned members of the NGO community, believe that it is imperative that agricultural employment should be given special emphasis in the Commission's theme of "Promotion of Full Employment and Decent Work for All" especially in countries where HIV/AIDS is rampant.

2. In concert with the African Member States, we recognize that some of the highest rates of HIV infections are found in the states of sub-Saharan Africa and we also recognize that despite all actions taken by African Member States and other stakeholders, the number of people living with HIV infection on the continent increased from 24.9 million in 2003 to 26.5 million in three years; and that this is compounded by the burden of TB, malaria and other infectious diseases;

3. We are also aware also that AIDS has disproportionately infected and affected women in sub-Saharan Africa, who in many developing countries comprise the majority of participants in agriculture, as well as in community organizations and care activities for the sick, and the majority of people infected with HIV/AIDS:[1] 59 per cent of HIV-positive adults in sub-Saharan Africa are women;

4. And we are aware that stigma and discrimination negates the human rights of people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, and still constitute a major barrier to an effective response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

5. In the light of this situation we believe that promoting agriculture as one form of decent work is essential to prevent the increased breakdown of society and increased malnutrition among those who live in areas afflicted by the pandemic. We believe this emphasis is necessary for two main reasons:

- Agriculture must be sustained to allow for sufficient quality food resources available at affordable prices in countries where the HIV/AIDS epidemic is currently concentrated.

6. We note particularly that:

a. Because HIV/AIDS has caused the death of many farmers, the promotion of work in agriculture must take into consideration that other resources may be needed to offset the reduction in human resources for farming.

b. Child labor increases with the demise of working age adults and when this occurs children tend to drop out of school.

7. The majority of farmers in African countries are women. Hence, care must be taken to ensure that the agricultural sector provides a form of decent employment for those women who will be impacted more than men in agriculture due to deaths from HIV/AIDS.

8. Research in Kenya indicated different outcomes if the farmer who died from AIDS was female rather than male:

- If a female head of household died (most from HIV/AIDS), it was more likely that the production of food crops like grain would be adversely affected while, if a male head of household died, it was likely that "cash crops" (coffee, tea and sugar) would be most affected.[2]

- If a male head of household died then farm equipment was sold off while, when a female head of household died, it was small animals that were sold when females died. So when men died it was less sustainable for women to continue to be farmers.

[1] May 2006, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), *Report on the global AIDS epidemic*.
[2] Yamano, T. and Jayne, T.S. (2002): Measuring the Impacts of Prime-Age Adult Death on Rural Households in Kenya, Working Paper No. 5, Tegemeo institute of Agricultural Policy and Development, Nairobi, Kenya.

Recommendations:

- Loevinsohn and Gillespie from the International Food Policy Institute have argued that one needs to develop a "HIV/AIDS lens" when considering agricultural policies.[3] Thus HIV must be "mainstreamed" into development policy. We urge that this idea be central in the formulation of policy for decent employment for all particularly in regions with a high rate of AIDS infection and where the agricultural sector forms a significant part of the national economy.

9. **With this in view we make the follow recommendations to national governments:**

- **Ensure that women are afforded the same property rights as men so they can have the financial means to continue farming and hire replacement labor if needed; without these rights they can seek employment in overcrowded urban areas which may lead to sexual exploitation or exploitation in domestic service and can exacerbate the general unemployment problems in the towns. We urge that loans to females and changes in property rights are necessary as parts of an employment promotion package geared to agriculture in a time of HIV/AIDS.**

- **Develop and provide resources for extension services so that loans to buy equipment and to avoid selling off assets can be provided as needed; such services should also provide agricultural job training to educate and resource a switch to less labor extensive crops and farming systems in the situation of reduced labor due to the pandemic.**

- **Provide additional resources from some of the current funding available in the face of the pandemic to ensure that education at both the primary and secondary levels is accessible to all children both girls and boys. Such education is essential for children to be prepared to enter the productive workforce.**

- **Child labor is not an acceptable substitute for adult labor. Instead policies should encourage the "importation" of replacement labor to make up for the loss of prime age adult deaths due to HIV/AIDS and to ensure that it is not child labor that does the replacing. Resources should be budgeted to ensure that the country's infrastructure is adequate for the accommodation and transport necessary for access to the agricultural areas, for HIV/AIDS care and treatment and for educational facilities. All of these elements must be a part of the "decent employment for all agenda."**

- **Policy to give attention to the agricultural sector as decent employment must take into account the differences between the death of a female head of household and a male head of household within the agricultural sector. It must ensure both the production of needed food crops and the more profitable cash crops. Surviving farmers need to be supplied with agricultural extension services so that they are able to plan for the more efficient use of the land along with needed access to cash crop markets.**

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[3] Loevinsohn, M. and Gillespies, S. (2003): *Food Security, and Rural Livelihoods*, FCND Discussion Paper No. 157, International Food Policy Institute, Washington D.C.

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Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: promoting full employment and decent work for all

Statement submitted by American Psychological Association, International Association of Applied Psychology, International Association of Schools of Social Work, International Council of Psychologists, International Federation of Social Workers, International Federation of Women in Legal Careers, International Federation of Women Lawyers, International Federation on Ageing, Human Lactation Center, Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, Soroptimist International, World Association for Psychosocial Rehabilitation, World Council for Psychotherapy, World Federation for Mental Health and World Federation of Ukrainian Women's Organizations, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 2006.

* E/CN.5/2007/1.

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Statement

1. We, the international non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and members of the NGO Committee on Mental Health, working under the auspices of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations (CONGO) are committed to the promotion of mental health and personal and societal well-being through prevention, treatment and delivery of quality mental health services by means of advocacy and education at the United Nations. Historically, the importance of including psychosocial aspects within the context of social development, the eradication of poverty and the establishment of sustainable employment has been largely overlooked at the United Nations. Growing scientific evidence of impediments to quality of life and productivity attributable to mental illness has heightened awareness of the global mental health agenda. The globalization of such an agenda, however, requires understanding that psychological and emotional well-being of individuals, families and communities is important to social development and requires the cooperation and leadership of Governments and societies. Prevention must be a priority coupled with research, education, legal capacity, training, and a public health system that incorporates an effective mental health component informed by economic and social development efforts. For example, full employment is a goal consistent with the needs of all people, including those suffering from mental distress and living in poverty. Everyone, by virtue of being human, requires fulfilling work and equitable remuneration commensurate with their capabilities, in order to function productively. Those who are excluded through discrimination, stigma or omission, must be empowered to challenge their conditions through legal resources and supportive social services. By joining forces, the mental health and social development fields can serve those who have been left out of the equation. People once considered a burden, in turn, become assets to their communities.

2. These objectives can be easily accomplished. New skills are not required to accomplish our mutual purposes. Mental health goals can be reached through the same methods of individual and collective capacity-building needed for developed, resilient and self-sustaining political economies and civil societies. Literacy, economic development, meaningful life-sustaining employment, effective laws, social service and network infrastructures are both mental health and social development tasks. So, too, are tools for the assessment of population outcomes and capabilities for community-level planning for social needs. By sharing tools, data and experience often separated in mental health and development categories, both fields will be strengthened. Prevention of mental illness and eradication of poverty on a large scale can be accomplished through collaborative efforts by merging social and health policy domains.

3. **Recommended action priorities**

- **Mental health and social development domains must be strengthened through collaboration in order to meet shared challenges and goals;**
- **In order to recognize the significance of mental health in the eradication of poverty, the promotion of mental health and the prevention of mental distress should be included as a fundamental element of economic and social development in all United Nations, Governments and civil society efforts;**

- **The goal of full employment must include those who suffer from mental disabilities;**
- **The delivery of quality mental health and social services should be included in all aspects of social development work;**
- **Governments, the United Nations system and NGOs should ensure resources for those with mental disabilities are available to all people in the form of meaningful employment, legal protections, policies and services;**
- **Governments and the United Nations system should be open to the informed suggestions of NGOs, as reflected in this statement;**
- **Capacity-building must be a fundamental principle of United Nations education, and civil society-related endeavours associated with both mental health and social development, whether focusing on the individual, the family or the community;**
- **Assessment of population outcomes and capabilities must encompass mental health in the context of social development;**
- **Conceptualization of social development issues, assessment tools, data analysis, and experience must be shared by both mental health and social development fields in order to overcome poverty and achieve a better quality of life and productivity for all people, inherent in our mutual purposes.**

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Statement submitted by American Psychological Association, Child Welfare League of America, Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Council, International Council of Psychologists, International Federation for Home Economics, International Federation of Social Workers, International Union of PsychologicalScience, National Council on Family Relations, SOS Kinderdorf International and World Federation of Ukrainian Women's Organizations, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

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* E/CN.5/2007/1.

06-64524 (E) 261206

Statement

1. We the undersigned NGOs commend the Commission for Social Development for recognizing the importance of "Promoting Full Employment: Decent Work for All." In accordance with United Nations General Assembly Resolution 6133 on: "Follow Up of the International Year of the Family," which calls on the Secretariat to continue promoting family issues within the United Nations system, we urge the Commission to address the following issues.

2. Family-friendly policies such as day care, parental leave benefits, preschool programs, elder care, mental health, social services and other publicly subsidized measures to reduce the friction between family care-giving and holding a job.

- Job development, full employment, and decent work;
- Education and job training to enhance marketable skills for all, especially vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities;
- Employment policies which promote family cohesion and provide health and social services;
- Equity between women and men regarding employment;
- Strict Government enforcement of international child labor standards;
- Safe working environments free of health hazards; and
- Trade and development policies which make labor migration a matter of choice rather than necessity.

3. **We strongly urge the Commission to include these key issues in its final documents to underscore the critical need for measures which promote full employment and decent work for all.**

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Statement submitted by Coalition against Trafficking in Women, Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, Congregations of St. Joseph, Dominican Leadership Conference, Grail, International Association of Schools of Social Work, International Council of Jewish Women, International Federation of Women in Legal Careers, International Federation of Women Lawyers, International Kolping Society, International Presentation Association of the Sisters of the Presentation, Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers, Maryknóll Sisters of St. Dominic, Pax Christi International, School Sisters of Notre Dame, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries, Soroptimist International, Teresian Association and UNANIMA International, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

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06-64536 (E) 281206

Statement

1. On priority theme **Full Employment and Decent Work for All**, we NGOs, emphasize that:

Decent work is a fundamental human pursuit that is part of the inalienable dignity of all people. Each person's ability to engage in meaningful and creative work ought to be bound by a commitment to human rights. The state has a major responsibility in ensuring decent work and protecting human rights.

2. Employment is a means of regulating the economic aspects of work and pertains to the social good. The state has a responsibility in ensuring that employment benefits all sectors of society, including women, youth, rural populations, minorities, migrants and immigrant populations.

3. Employment is an occasion to reflect the gifts, talents, and contributions of each person to the common good. Proper work is an enhancement of the human person; workers should be able to earn a living wage with adequate benefits and be employed in working conditions that comply with human rights standards such as a living wage, safety in the workplace, an environment free from sexual harassment and discrimination, and family friendly work policies.

4. We express special concern to the 45th Commission on Social Development that women and girls are discriminated against in relation to work and employment; they receive neither full social protection nor the assurance of human rights. Especially heinous is the susceptibility that girls and women face from sexual exploitation in the workplace.

5. We note that:

There is a growing global industry that prostitutes and sexually exploits girls and women, often referred to as commercial sexual exploitation. Many claim this to be decent work. We note with sadness that even the ILO has grouped the prostitution of children with "worst forms of labor", rather than as a stark human rights violation.[1] We reject the notion that the purchased use of women for sexual demand is related to employment or work.

6. Governments benefit economically from the sexual exploitation of women and girls, through increased taxes, where this human rights violation is legal, and through income from tourism, where the prostitution of women may be illegal but continues to flourish due to tolerance and corruption. Governments must be accountable for any complicity in gender discrimination.

7. The largest employment category for girls under 16 is domestic work.[2] This constitutes a dangerous environment, most often without regulation or protection.

8. According to a recently released United Nations study, child workers across the globe report maltreatment that includes physical punishment, humiliation and

[1] ILO Convention No. 182: Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999.

[2] Child Labour: Targeting the Intolerable, Report submitted to the 86th Session of Int. Labour Conf., Geneva ILO Office 1998.

sexual harassment. Additionally, "girls are subject to sexual violence from male members of the family of their employer".[3]

9. A study in Kenya demonstrates that over 75 per cent of girls interviewed felt that the practice of commercial sex tourism is a "normal and an acceptable means to earn a living."[4] The experiences of our NGOs oblige us to assume that this attitude is widespread across all regions.

10. Current patterns of migration have exacerbated the vulnerabilities of women and girls to exploitation as they attempt to participate in work and employment. Of special note is the rise of international trafficking of women for sexual exploitation, estimated to affect at least 1.2 million persons each year, up to half of whom are children.[5] This phenomenon is "driven by demand and fuelled by poverty".[6]

11. Women are overrepresented and often trapped in the informal and unpaid, non-wage work sectors, including home-based work, child and eldercare, self-employment, and temporary employment. Those in the informal economy have meager access to clean water, electricity and social services; they are more vulnerable to property loss and disability; and have less access to financial, physical and other productive assets.[7]

12. We believe that these conditions, deteriorating in our time despite the Millennium Development Goals, shame persons of goodwill and conscience. They can be changed, however, by strong commitments of governments to the implementation of national and international agreements, particularly those articulated by the Beijing Platform for Action and the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action.

13. We agree with the United Nations Special Rapporteur that the "lack of rights afforded to women serves as the primary causative factor at the root of both migration and trafficking". Therefore polices that ensure the human rights of girls and women, that are subject to gender analyses, and that eradicate traditional practices of male domination can ensure decent work and fair employment for women and girls while enhancing the social cohesion and security of nations.

14. We know that where commitment and resources have been directed, progress has been made. This is particularly true where Micro Enterprise programmes in conjunction with education, have had great success in empowering women, not only economically but in all aspects of human development and social participation. Of particular note is Handcrafting Justice, an international Fair Trade project of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, developed in cooperation with women struggling for economic justice and independence in the developing world. http://www.handcraftingjustice.org/index.php?lang=en&pt=c&p=aboutUs. Sadly such programmes tend to be underfunded and often lack essential partnership with governments.

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[3] United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence Against Children, Prof. Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, A/61/299, August 2006.

[4] Kenya: Study Targets Child Sex Tourism, The Nation (Nairobi), September 14, 2006.

[5] UNFPA, State of the World Population Report: Selling Hope and Stealing Dreams, June 2006.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director, UNIFEM: 2 September 2005 International Herald Tribune.

15. We have also seen a decline in the use of women for sexual exploitation in places where governments have named the abuse and criminalized those who prostitute women, such as happens in Sweden.

16. **Building on such knowledge and practice, we note urgent enabling conditions to support full employment and decent work for women:**

Full universal education for girl children, with girls' participation in developing programmes;

Practical allocation of resources from States to eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls and to ensure full social inclusion of women and girls, including the development of strategies to change cultural practices which discriminate against gender;

Regular evaluation of legal instruments, social policies and practices that discriminate against women, with commitment to change such practices and promulgate a social guarantee for gender inclusion;

Decriminalization of women who are prostituted;

Legal sanctions against those who purchase women or girls for sexual use;

Access to affordable childcare in order to reduce barriers to participation in the formal economic sector;

Recognition of informal sector labour as both work and employment that adds value to the social good; policies ought to promote micro levels of development with participation and decision-making by women, as well as the inclusion of women on macro level policy development;

Government partnership with NGOs that develop competent microenterprise activities within grassroots communities;

Review of migration policies, building on the High level Dialogue of September 2006, with a commitment to assist in gender-specific integration of migrants into the country of destination;

State actions directed to halt human trafficking and the smuggling of persons.

17. **We support all implementation of social and economic polices that keep the human person at the centre and as priority. Our NGOs are ready to partner with governments in the implementation of policies that support gender equality, especially in relation to work and employment.**

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Statement submitted by Foundation for the Rights of the Family, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

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* E/CN.5/2007/1.

06-64951 (E) 221206

Statement

1. "Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment" (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 23 1).

2. "Productive work and employment are central elements of development as well as decisive elements of human identity. Sustained economic growth and sustainable development as well as the expansion of productive employment should go hand in hand" (Chapter 3, Expansion of Productive Employment and Reduction of Unemployment, para. 42, Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development, The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, page 37, 6-12 March 1995).

The right to employment

3. Full employment and a decent standard of living for all are fundamental goals, and it is the responsibility of the State to promote their attainment.

4. The International Labour Organization's guiding principle is the promotion of social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights.

5. Under contemporary globalization, international labour has increased, while levels of exploitation have accelerated. Lack of legal protection for migrant workers heightens the possibility of their being used as instruments for maintaining competitiveness because they are obliged to work in situations where decent work conditions are not enforced.

Employment and the family

6. The family, as the oldest unit of human organization, is part of the continuity of humanity and a major link between generations; it is a unique community of persons, with their functions, rights and duties, as well as an emotional, educational, cultural, civic, economic and social reality. Families transmit the message and lessons of history and play an important part in its evolution.

7. Society is responsible for guaranteeing the family the sufficient resources to cope with their tasks, such as: legislation and other norms which regulate the relations between family members and the family and society, various financial support measures and basic services such as a child care system, health care and educational system.

8. The greatest cause of poverty in the family is unemployment. In fact, employment is the key factor in integration into society, and in preventing exclusion.

9. The families most at risk from poverty are those with no earner, or only one earner. The personal and social impact of unemployment on families include poverty, financial hardship, homelessness. Unemployment puts large numbers of children at risk and transmits poverty across generations.

10. It is therefore important to give everyone, from the youngest age, the maximum of chances for finding employment. The exercise of family

responsibilities by women and their unequal distribution between the two partners must not be a discriminatory factor at the moment of recruitment.

11. In many cases, women suffer from the lack of recognition given to their work in the household, since domestic tasks remain invisible and are accorded no monetary value in society.

12. Flexible hours should be afforded as a way to foster the sharing of parents and domestic responsibilities by women and men alike; regulations on employment should be revised in order to help family members to cope with work and their family responsibilities.

13. With this purpose, employers should take steps that would allow family members to better manage their work and family life and to ensure that leave to care for a family member on part-time working hours do not detrimentally affect job security, career prospects or pension entitlement.

A declaration on the family

14. For many years, nothing has been more at the centre of concern of PRODEFA than a Declaration on the Functions, Responsibilities and Rights of the Family.

15. Societies worldwide recognize that the family has a number of social functions and responsibilities.

16. The International Conference on Population (Cairo 1994) implicitly recognizes the rights of the family, alongside its functions, in chapter VI of its Programme of Action entitled: "The Family, its Roles, Rights, Composition and Structures".

17. The explicit articulation of the responsibilities, functions and rights of the family can be a source of inspiration and a point of reference to support families and create family-friendly societies.

18. **We, therefore, suggest that an open-ended working group be created within the Commission for Social Development, to review and extract relevant provisions on the family from national laws, international instruments and existing draft declarations.**

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Statement submitted by International Council on Social Welfare, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

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Statement

I. Introduction

1. In 1995, world leaders gathered in Copenhagen for the United Nations World Summit for Social Development. They committed themselves to promoting full employment. Ten years after the commitment the number of people with no work reached its highest point ever and continues to rise to this day and the number of working poor was at the same level as 10 years earlier.

Jobless growth

2. Global unemployment is rising, despite the impressive growth in global gross domestic product (GDP). Economic growth is not translating into new jobs.

3. We are also concerned about the conditions of work of employed people. Of the over 2.8 billion workers in the world today, nearly 1.4 billion are under the US$2 a day poverty line. As many as 1995. Among these working poor, 550 million lived with their families on less than US$1 a day.

The social character of the crisis

4. 90 million of the 200 million jobless persons worldwide, are young people aged 15 to 24. Youth who can find work often face long working hours, short-term or informal contracts, low pay and little or no social protection.

5. Industrialized and developing countries are failing to increase employment opportunities for young people. The youth labour force participation rate declined from 59.3 to 54.4% between 1994 and 2004, mainly as a result of young people staying longer in education. The global unemployment rate among youth is 13.8%, up from 11.7% a decade earlier.

6. Child labour, especially its worst forms, is being reduced in many parts of the world. The number of child labourers has fallen by 11% or 28 million fewer than 2002. The sharpest decrease is in the area of hazardous work undertaken by children. There has been a 26% reduction overall and 33% fewer children between the ages of 5 and 14 are endangering their lives in hazardous work. One in seven of the world's children is in child labour.

7. Job opportunities for women are increasing. Some gender gaps in wages, treatment and opportunities in the workplace are shrinking. Women's education and entrepreneurship are rising. Yet gender discrimination still pervades the labour market. Women comprise 60% of the world's 550 million working poor. Women are more likely to earn less than men for the same type of work.

8. Women's contribution to household work exceeds that of men in almost all economies. Women are more likely than men to be involved in productive yet informal (and hence less visible and difficult to measure) activities including subsistence agriculture, family businesses and home-based work.

9. Today there are 191 million migrants, which include those migrating for employment, their dependants, refugees and asylum seekers. At 95 million, women constitute almost half of all international migrants.

10. Migrant workers send home to developing countries large volumes of remittances to support their families and communities. They contribute to the economic growth and prosperity in host countries. The US$250 billion sent home by migrant workers is more than all Official Development Assistance (ODA) and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Developing countries lose 10 to 30% of skilled workers and professionals through "brain drain".

11. Today's migrants face poor work conditions and discrimination. Migrant workers are in demand for low-paid, less skilled jobs in agriculture, cleaning and maintenance, construction, domestic service and health care.

12. Barriers exist to prevent potential migrants meeting the demand for foreign labour in host countries. This makes smuggling and trafficking of human beings highly profitable. About 10-15% of migration today involves migration under irregular situations, which leads to exploitation, forced labour and abuse of human rights.

13. Half the world's labour force is in the agricultural sector. Agricultural workers are among the poorest segments of society. Women account for over half of agricultural labour. Many children work in agriculture because their families cannot otherwise support them. It is estimated that 70% of the world's working children are involved in agriculture.

14. Highly-subsidized agricultural exports from the US and Europe unfairly undermine other producers.

15. When cheaper and highly subsidized agriculture imports come into the developing countries marginal farmers who have been cultivating these crops lose. Rural poverty forces many small farmers to migrate to cities for alternative work, adding to the social and infrastructure problems of cities.

16. Of the 40 million people worldwide infected with HIV/AIDS, 90% are in their productive and reproductive prime (ages 15-49) – people who are the mainstay of families, communities, enterprises and economies.

17. By 2020, HIV/AIDS is expected to cause a 10% to 30% reduction in the labour force in high-prevalence countries. There are deeper implications for the structure of families, the survival of communities and enterprises. There are longer-term issues of sustaining productive capacity.

18. The year 2006 is the 10th birthday of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative, the current scheme for international debt relief. In July 2005, the G8 agreed to cancel some of the debts of some of the poorest countries in the world. Relieved of debt payments coming into effect on 1 July 2006, some impoverished countries are able to release billions of dollars to spend on their own needs. The World Bank, the IMF and the African Development Fund will cancel debts to 19 countries that have met the requirements of the enhanced HIPC Initiative. Eleven other countries remain potentially eligible for debt relief under the initiative, but are kept out of the running by conflict, poor governance and arrears in payments. The HIPC scheme - even if it works - does not take into account poor middle-income countries, which also have severe debt burdens.

Indecent work

19. Workers' safety and health is a major concern. Each day, an average of 6,000 people die as a result of work-related accidents or diseases, totaling more than 2.2 million work-related deaths a year. Each year, workers suffer approximately 270 million occupational accidents that lead to absences from work for three days or more. Workers fall victim to some 160 million incidents of work-related disease.

20. Each year 100,000 people are killed by asbestos. The number is rising. Although global production of asbestos has fallen since the 1970s, increasing numbers of workers in the United States of America, Canada, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Germany and other industrialized countries are dying from past exposure.

21. Silicosis – a fatal lung disease caused by exposure to silica dust – affects tens of millions of workers around the world. In Latin America, 37% of miners have the disease, rising to 50% among miners aged over 50. In India, over 50% of slate pencil workers and 36% of stonecutters have silicosis.

22. In many countries minerals are extracted through the process of artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM). About 13 million people worldwide work in ASM and 100 million depend on it for their livelihood. Small-scale mineworkers face huge safety and health problems – including exposure to dust, mercury and other chemicals as well as poor ventilation, inadequate space and over exertion. Women who are paid less than men provide up to 50% of the small-scale mining workforce. Many children work in ASM. In Papua New Guinea children provide up to 30% of the small-scale mining workforce. China's small-scale coal mines, which employ roughly 2.5 million people, are among the world's most dangerous. Official statistics suggest that around 6,000 people die each year in these mines.

Decent work security

23. Social security is the protection that a society provides to individuals and households to ensure access to health care and to guarantee income security, particularly in cases of old age, unemployment, sickness, invalidity, work injury, maternity or loss of a breadwinner. Only 20% of the world's population has adequate social security coverage. Half lacks any kind of social security protection at all.

24. In addition, many people have insufficient coverage. In sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, only 5% to 10% of the working population has some social security coverage. In middle-income countries, social security coverage generally ranges from 20% to 60% of the population.

Policy directions – Economic growth is not enough

25. From the UN World Summit in 1995 to the ECOSOC Ministerial of 2006 the global community has made full and productive employment and decent work a central objective of national development policies. Economic growth, increased trade and production are only part of development success. Growth does not bring full employment and decent jobs. We must integrate the social with macroeconomic policies. We need convergence of investment, education, health, labour market, local

development and other policies to meet the challenge of reducing decent work imbalances and poverty.

26. At a micro level, cooperatives are well placed to mobilize social capital. Cooperatives can bridge the economic and the social by providing employment, an equitable distribution of profits and above all, social justice. The global cooperative movement directly provides productive self-employment for several hundred million worker-owners of production and services cooperatives, as well as the non-member employees of cooperative enterprises. In Europe, cooperatives provide employment to more than 5 million individuals.

27. Micro level solutions cannot replace macro level policies for long term solutions. The respect for and promotion of fundamental principles and rights at work is absolutely necessary. This includes freedom of association, the elimination of forced labour, child labour and discrimination in employment.

28. Social protection must be extended, particularly for workers in agriculture and the informal economy who are often not covered by labour legislation. Statutory social security systems for workers do not exist in many countries. Where they do, they often have very limited coverage. An ongoing problem is that labour regulations and policy, where they exist, are seldom enforced in developing countries and thus, fail to protect workers from jobs with low pay and poor working conditions.

29. On July 1st, 2003, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families entered into force. The global challenge today is for all countries to formulate policies and mechanisms to regulate and manage labour migration and ensure that it contributes to the development of both home and host societies and to the well-being of migrants.

30. Reforms intended to open countries to world markets have stimulated productivity growth and better macroeconomic performance. This has been at the cost of destroying jobs and increasing informal employment. Increasing foreign competition forces firms to reduce labour costs by cutting workers' benefits, increasing temporary employment and subcontracting with establishments in the informal sector. All these factors explain why stronger growth is associated with growing informality and deteriorating labour market conditions. For many of the world's poorer countries, rapid globalization and trade liberalization have led to unfair competition, adverse terms of trade, job displacements and worsening employment prospects.

31. At its fortieth session, in 2002, the Commission for Social Development considered the priority theme "Integration of social and economic policy". Resolution 40/1 underscores the importance of recognizing the interdependence between social and economic policies and promotes their integration. The statement acknowledged the importance of broadening the scope of macroeconomic policy to integrate social and economic policy. Social development goals, however, require long-term frameworks while macroeconomic policy operates in a short-term time frame. Poverty reduction and social equity are long term goals whereas economic/financial goals (wages, inflation, interest rates, exchange rates, etc.) are short term.

Short-term growth does not ensure long-term livelihoods.

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Statement submitted by Baha'i International Community, Congregations of St. Joseph, Dominican Leadership Conference, Elizabeth Seton Federation, Franciscans International, Grail, Human Lactation Center, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, International Presentation Association of the Sisters of the Presentation, Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers, Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic, People's Decade of Human Rights Education, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries, Soroptimist International, UNANIMA International and United States Committee for UNIFEM, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

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Statement

I. Introduction

1. On the occasion of this forty-fifth session of the Commission for Social Development on the Theme of the "Promotion of Full Employment and Decent Work for All", the NGOs endorsing this statement draw attention to the issue of ending the discrimination and exploitation of migrant women and girls.

II. Recommendations

2. We urge all Member States to:

- **Immediately ratify and implement the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.**
- **Recognize the link between migration, trade, aid, development and gender rights and support the 8 Millennium Development Goals.**
- **Create a UN Forum on Migration Issues within the United Nations. Such a Forum would facilitate dialogue to review policies and make recommendations for developing further policies. The inclusion and participation of migrants, NGOs, and the private sector in this dialogue, along with member states will ensure true United Nations partnerships and the most effective way for policy creation.**
- **Create or transform their social, economic and political structures to promote conditions leading to the human development of all people.**
- **Formulate, implement and develop migration policy consistent with the international human rights standards. Counter intolerance, racism and discrimination ensuring that migrants have equal access to employment, education, healthcare, legal protection and that their human rights are respected and protected.**
- **Combat corruption and organized crime. This will be a significant factor in halting the scourge of trafficking and the smuggling of persons.**
- **Develop and implement resources for human rights education especially for government officials and all who are charged with security and immigration enforcement.**

3. We in the NGO community commit to support any of the above actions to stop the discrimination and exploitation of migrant women and girls.

The Female Face of Migration

4. There are now about 192 million people living outside their place of birth, which is about three per cent of the world's population. This means that roughly one of every thirty-five persons in the world is a migrant.[1] In some countries, the percentage of women migrants is as high as 80 percent.

[1] International Organization for Migration: http://www.iom.int/jahia/page3.html

Migration also has a young face with about 1/3 of migrants from developing countries aged between 12 and 24 years old.

5. Women and children, in particular girl children, are among the most vulnerable of all migrants. Female migrants are vulnerable to conflict gender based violence, discrimination, and cultural restrictions. On the other hand, the migration of women has the potential to provide great benefit to families and society in both sending and receiving countries. Good immigration policy should empower women in ways that promote these benefits.

6. Data on female migration especially indigenous women is generally inadequate and we urge further research in the area. We do know that the experience of women and girls in migration differs both positively and negatively from that of men.

7. Many women migrate to escape poverty and lack of decent work in their home countries. Although globalization does have positive benefits, there are significant negative impacts; for example, unskilled and poorly educated women and girls experience its effects as an increase in poverty and marginalization. They move to survive. More skilled workers know that they can find better pay, better working conditions and greater security in richer countries. Detrimental impacts of recent free trade agreements include increased poverty among those who can least afford it individually, nationally, regionally, as confirmed in United Nations reports prepared at the end of the United Nation's first decade to eradicate poverty.

8. Others are forced to leave the land of their birth because of health emergencies and natural disasters. Some migrate to richer countries in the hope of finding treatment for disease and malnutrition. Others depart their homelands because natural disasters like tsunamis, hurricanes or earthquakes leave them homeless and vulnerable. Other times –all too often - war, political persecution and discrimination caused by political, cultural and religious differences force their movement from their birthplaces. Finally, in some cases, particularly for women, suffering torture or sexual violence at the hands of those who should most protect them leaves them little choice but to flee their country of origin or transit.

9. An effective immigration policy must be one that is a human rights-based approach, is intimately linked with trade and foreign policy and which allows for the development of countries of origin as well as benefiting the country of destination.

10. On the positive side, migration can facilitate women's escape from conflict, personal violence, discrimination, cultural restrictions or oppressive gender roles to assert greater autonomy over their lives. Migration may offer new job opportunities, economic opportunities and decision-making power, as well as better education and access to health care for both themselves and their children. Through remittances income can be provided for impoverished families in a women's country of origin. Further, by filling the gaps in labor forces it can benefit countries of destination. These working women benefit the governments in the countries of destination by paying taxes, contributing to social security funds and serving as leaders in their families and communities.

11. Women and girls, do however, face greater personal risks and may experience coercion, violence, theft and fraud in the migration process. For example, it is estimated that the number of trafficked people across the world number more than 3 million, with 80 per cent of them being women and girls. The trafficking of women, young girls and boys is now the third largest source of profits for organized crime after drugs and guns.[2] Further, the loss of the services of well-qualified women migrants hurts the home country particularly in the health and education sector. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, the loss of skilled health care workers and teachers leaves the home country without needed experienced persons to cope with the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the education of the next generation. And girls separated from their families suffer irreparable consequences.

12. In recent years, the difficulty of attracting and retaining healthcare workers particularly in long-term care settings has dramatically increased. Long-term care settings and healthcare employers in developed countries have attracted a growing number of international workers from developing countries to address these critical shortages. The most intimate care to frail older persons in developed countries is increasingly provided by young migrating women. Integrating migrating nurses and aides into the host countries can be a major challenge and discrimination is reported frequently. Young women answer an ad to be an "au pair" and discover a different reality. Further analysis of the potential causes and existing patterns of international migration of workers to work in developed countries is needed. Key policy issues and the positive and negative impacts of migration in both developed and the developing countries need to be addressed.

13. We want to draw attention to the special vulnerability of women and girl migrants and their protection needs at all stages of the migration process and reiterate the need for a human rights based approach to migration.

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2 "Women And International Migration a Long Neglected Issue", Ghanaian Chronicle, September 19, 2006, Copyright 2006 All Africa, Inc. Africa News

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Statement submitted by Christian Children's Fund and School Sisters of Notre Dame, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

* E/CN.5/2007/1.

06-65773 (E) 050107

Statement

1. Despite decades of efforts by national governments, international agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), 1 billion children continue to live in conditions of poverty and vulnerability. The families of these children, caught in the trap of poverty, often have no alternative but to rely on their children's labour to ensure their survival. The sad reality is that the sacrifice of these children's education and childhood only ensures continued poverty for the children, their families, and their communities. Significantly reducing the incidence of hazardous and exploitative child labour and ensuring that all children have access to quality education are essential to guaranteeing full employment and decent work for all, as well as to breaking the cycle of poverty.

2. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), an estimated 218 million children worldwide, between age five and 17, engage in some form of child labour. Of these children, an estimated 126 million engage in illegal, hazardous, or exploitative child labour. Approximately 8 million children are engaged in the worst forms of child labour.

3. Many children leave their communities in search of work; this includes travelling from rural to urban areas or to different countries within the same region, or sometimes even overseas. There, they may be exploited sexually, marginalized, and deprived of basic human rights.

4. The risk of child labour is not always equally distributed — often it is the poorest, most marginalized children who are at greatest risk of engaging in dangerous labour as a means of survival.

5. While both boys and girls engage in hazardous work in order to supplement their family's income, girls often sacrifice their education so that they may work to pay for a male sibling to attend school.

"We work so that the boys can go to school." - Adolescent girl, village near Kabala, Sierra Leone.

6. Hidden away, some children work as domestic servants. These children, most often girls, are vulnerable to trafficking, exploitation, and physical and sexual abuse. Child domestic workers as young as five often work 12-18 hours per day to supplement their families' income. The long hours and working conditions deprive them of their childhood, education and exclude them from society.

7. An estimated 1.2 million children under the age of 18 are trafficked throughout the world. Boys are primarily trafficked to work in the agricultural sector and young girls are largely trafficked to work in the commercial sex industry and domestic servitude. Children engaged in armed forces and armed groups are often forced to work as combatants, messengers, porters, cooks, or sexual slaves.

8. While many children contribute to their family's household in ways that allows them to engage in productive childhood activities, there are many children who are exploited. Many child labourers work for little pay and lack access to basic education, healthcare and other social services. It is no coincidence that children who work long hours under hazardous conditions lack the opportunity to attend school. Under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, children have the right to be protected from performing any work that is likely to exclude them from accessing education.

"My sister got married and I had to take over her household work, so I had to leave school. My father told me, 'Now that your sister is married, how can you go to school? Graze the cattle during daytime and at night you can study at home." – Adolescent girl, Oruro, Bolivia

9. Given the poverty faced by millions of families around the world, children often have no choice but to share in familial responsibilities; and children, well aware of the poverty in which they live, sometimes express fulfilment from their work, as it allows them to contribute to their family's survival.

10. Reducing the incidence of child labour around the world requires more than removing children from hazardous or exploitative work. Ending child labour entails long-term community-based development and strengthening child

protection mechanisms at the family, community, and societal levels. Parents must have access to decent work or alternative income generation schemes so they no longer depend on their children's income for survival, and children must be provided with access to quality education.

11. Education is vital to the elimination of child labour. While progress has been made over the past decade in getting more children into school, the pace remains far too slow. Furthermore, the poor quality of some education causes high dropout and repetition rates.

12. Meaningful, quality education which enables the full development of the human person promotes social and economic development. Education which advances understanding, tolerance and respect for human rights protects children from exploitation. Education which encourages the development of the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for all persons to participate effectively in their communities, leads to full employment and decent work for all and can put an end to child labor.

13. The promotion of education for children contributes to the elimination of child labor and to full employment. Education for children leads to the longer term outcome of decent work for adults. In the context of child labor, it is important to ensure that education be a protective environment that includes ongoing monitoring of risks, as well as action to address those risks.

14. Many NGOs working around the world have found that, coupled with other important activities, providing children with formal, non-formal, vocational education and literacy training reduces the incidence of exploitative child labor. Governments, such as the United States of America, Germany, Italy, Spain and Canada, have been leaders in the international effort to combat exploitative child labor by funding technical assistance programs – implemented by ILO-IPEC and NGOs – that promote education for current and former child laborers.

Recommendations

15. **Child labour perpetuates the cycle of poverty and low-wage earning as adults, limits educational opportunities and, in some cases, drives down adult wages. In order to break the cycle of poverty and promote decent work for all, efforts must be taken to ensure that children are not engaged in hazardous work and that all children have access to education. This includes:**

- **Making education a priority and recognizing the key role it plays in eradicating poverty, putting an end to child labour, and creating full employment and decent work for all.**
- **Ensuring that all children have access to quality education, including early childhood development programs, primary school, secondary school and vocational programs.**
- **Promoting national labour law enforcement, especially adherence to ILO Convention 182 and ILO Convention 138.**
- **Promoting national education policies and strengthening education systems in order to prevent children from engaging in hazardous labour and that are more responsive to the needs of children who leave hazardous work.**
- **Promoting social safety nets for vulnerable children, so that they need not resort to child labour.**
- **Providing rehabilitation, catch-up education and psycho-social support for children who have exited exploitative or hazardous labour.**
- **Strengthening mechanisms at multiple levels for monitoring, reporting, and addressing exploitative labour practices, and the forms of abuse and exploitation that lead children into dangerous labour situations.**

- **Establishing community based child labour monitoring and service referral systems or committees that mobilize community members in identifying children who are working or at risk of working in hazardous activities, and then refer children and parents to social services available in their community.**

- **Involving children and youth, in a meaningful way, in the development and evaluation of child-targeted education, skills training, or employment programs.**

- **Advocacy on child-friendly policies and implementation mechanisms that discourage children's participation in exploitative labour and promote access to education.**

- **Ensuring that the conditions and wages of adult workers are improved. Improvements in the conditions of adult workers results in the decline of child labour, since parents can 'afford' to take their children out of the labour force.**

- **Providing parents of child labourers and children vulnerable to entering work with access to alternative generating income opportunities or vocational and skills training, so that they no longer depend on the income of their children for survival.**

Note:

Statement supported by the following non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council: Dominican Leadership Conference, International Council of Jewish Women, International Presentation Association of the Sisters of the Presentation, Peace Worldwide, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namor and Soroptimist International.

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Statement submitted by Christian Children's Fund, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

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Statement

1. In order to guarantee full employment and decent work – productive work in which rights are protected, which generates an adequate income, with adequate social protection – for all, youth must have access to viable employment opportunities.

2. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), the world is facing a growing youth employment crisis. Young people, between the ages of 15 and 24, represent approximately 41% of the world's unemployed. Youth unemployment rates are higher than those of adults, and are often two to three times than those of adults. The ILO has found that "a global deficit of decent work opportunities has resulted in a situation in which one out of every three youth in the world is either seeking but unable to find work, has given up the job search entirely or is working but still living below the US$2 a day poverty line."[1]

3. Young people also often find themselves "at the back of the line" for jobs and are often unable to find jobs in the formal economy. A lack of social safety nets, however, means that youth must engage in some form of work to survive. While the informal economy may provide youth with a source of income, "there has also been disturbing evidence of a rise in the number of unemployed urban youth who are turning to street crime, gangs, prostitution and armed conflict."[2]

4. There is also a growing concern that "the informal work will become the only option for large numbers of young people, thereby making the objective of decent employment for all increasingly unattainable. The distinction between employment and unemployment is gradually losing much of its meaning as young people move into and out of the informal sector, where neither term has any real relevance."[3]

5. Today, there are 191 million migrants worldwide, and young people account for around 30% of this total. Youth are forced to migrate – from rural to urban areas, or to other countries – in search of work. The journeys that young people take, leaving their homes in search of better lives, can lead to danger and exploitation, as well as education and opportunity. It is important to note that youth migrants submit significant sums of money to their home countries through remittances.

6. Young people surveyed in an online consultation on migration done by the Global Youth Action Network suggested and applauded programs and national policy that allow young migrants to enter countries temporarily, and later bring money and skills back to their home countries.

"Those who are fortunate to have been empowered economically by their migration can now have the opportunity to empower others and hence reduce the risk of every young person leaving or wanting to leave their country." Stephen Asek, 25, Cameroon[4]

"Free and better education must be provided for youths and employment facilities for youths both abroad and home country. Most, if not all, youths migrate because of better education or well paying, lucrative jobs." Andrew Kondoh, 25, Sierra Leone[5]

7. Given these concerns, to date, there has been little consistent focus on this age group, even though youth are vulnerable to unemployment and idleness and often lack access to secondary school.

8. While many poor countries have made progress in providing basic education to children, many school systems are now faced, and ill-equipped, with the learning needs of youth. A big challenge for many countries remains providing youth with access to secondary education, especially lower secondary school. Research has found that "low levels of youth unemployment can coexist with a weak youth labor market as a result of extended participation in education by a high proportion of the young population. Education and training policies are thus inextricably linked to patterns of unemployment."[6]

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[1] ILO, *Global Employment Trends for Youth*, 2006; Foreword.
[2] United Nations, *World Youth Report 2003: The Global Situation of Young People*, Youth Employment; 2004; 62, 67-68.
[3] United Nations, *World Youth Report 2003: The Global Situation of Young People*, Youth Employment; 2004; 67-68.
[4] Global Youth Action Network 2006, online survey response, *http://groups.takingitglobal.org/Youthmigration*.
[5] Global Youth Action Network 2006, online survey response, *http://groups.takingitglobal.org/Youthmigration*.
[6] United Nations, *World Youth Report 2003: The Global Situation of Young People*, Youth Employment; 2004; 62.

The World Youth Report states that, "for young people, jobs provide a source not only of income, but also of dignity and self-respect. Youth who enter the workforce with limited job prospects, underdeveloped skills and inadequate education face the highest risk of long-term unemployment, underemployment and low-wage employment throughout their working lives, making them more vulnerable to social exclusion. Furthermore, unemployment and inadequate employment among youth contribute to high levels of poverty." [7]

9. "Without the right foothold from which to start out right in the labor market, young people are less able to make choices that will improve their own job prospects and those of their future dependents. This, in turn, perpetuates the cycle of insufficient education, low-productivity employment and working poverty from one generation to the next." [8]

Recommendations

10. In order to address the needs of older children and youth, targeted attention and programs are necessary. These efforts could include:

- **National and community-based programs for youth on livelihoods and employment, including non-formal and vocational education and the promotion of small businesses. This could be done in partnership with local authorities and NGOs due to their direct interaction with communities at grassroots level. Targeted vocational training allows youth to access skilled employment. However, in order for vocational training programs to be successful, they must be coupled with comprehensive market surveys to ensure that there is a demand for the skill and that there are job opportunities in that field. Vocational training programs should also be linked to micro-finance programs, allowing trained youth to start businesses, if they choose to do so. Another important option to ensuring the success of vocational training programs is linking such programs to job placement or apprenticeship programs.**
- **Forming local youth venues for participation in decision-making, such as local youth councils, with real power and adequate funding for their activities. This shall guarantee youth participation in decision-making at the local level.**
- **Involving young people in the development and evaluation of youth-targeted education, skills, or employment programs.**
- **Engaging Youth in Poverty Reduction Strategy Processes and Country Assistance Strategies, including programs targeting rural and urban areas.**
- **Promoting income generating activities for youth, through micro-finance and small enterprise training, as well as promoting youth cooperatives that foster and support creative and innovative ideas.**
    - **Seeking partnerships aimed at increasing employment opportunities and sustainable livelihoods. Youth must participate in the development of national action plans on youth employment, including promotion of entrepreneurship amongst youth through provision of better information, training, and access to resources and professional mentoring programs.**
    - **Motivating youth volunteerism at the national and international levels, and focusing on assisting marginalized and vulnerable youth to organize them to address their own needs and interests.**
    - **Allowing youth to participate in the programming and implementing of a youth employment network to prevent youth marginalization and poverty.**
    - **Emphasizing partnerships between governments and youth, including youth participation as delegates and representatives at international conferences and forums by LDCs, developing countries, and developed countries.**

[7] United Nations, *World Youth Report 2003: The Global Situation of Young People*, Youth Employment; 2004; 67-68.
[8] ILO, *Global Employment Trends for Youth*, 2006; Foreword.

- **Resolving to strengthen youth employment initiatives, such as the Youth Employment Network.**

- **Increasing the employment intensity of economic growth, "especially in the rapidly expanding sectors of the economy. Governments can establish incentive structures that promote employment-intensive growth by directing investment to sectors that are more employment intensive."[9]**

- **Providing young people with opportunities to "learn through work" – which would allow youth to gain practical and transferable skills and allow employers to get to know the youth they may employ in the future.**

- **Governments should adopt policies and initiatives to promote economic growth *and* job creation.**

Note:

Statement endorsed and supported by the following non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council: Brothers of Charity, Dominican Leadership Conference, Elizabeth Seton Federation, Global Youth Action Network, International Council of Jewish Women, International Union for Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, Lutheran World Federation and Peace Worldwide.

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[9] United Nations, *World Youth Report 2003: The Global Situation of Young People*, Youth Employment; 2004; 62.

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Statement submitted by Unitarian Universalist Association, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

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Statement

1. On the occasion of the 45th Commission's theme of "Promotion of Full Employment and Decent Work for All," members of the NGO community working for AIDS competence believe that *social capital and human capacity development* should be given special emphasis in especially in countries where HIV/AIDS is rampant.

2. Relevant to the priority theme of the CSD, the NGOs endorsing this statement, Emphasize that

- The decent work and employment agenda must further implement the 1995 Copenhagen Declaration on the need to put people at the centre of development. National efforts need to address more effectively, in formal and informal employment settings, the growing HIV/AIDS pandemic with provisions of education, training and prevention programmes, full employment and the fostering of social integration to enhance human capacity and facilitate destigmatisation and equitable access to care and support services.

- Decent work agenda must advance people's rights to participate and freedom to regain confidence assuming responsibility for care and prevention, addressing vulnerability, and utilising human strengths in family, local neighbourhood and workplace for a hopeful future. Consistent with a human development framework, these achievements will enhance the learning and sharing of human knowledge and experience to strengthen platforms for policy determination. Member states must ensure the promotion of decent work that contributes to both human capacity development and economic growth.

3. We share concerns with the International Labour Organization that

The global HIV/AIDS pandemic jeopardizes the achievement of the goals set by the World Summit for Social Development (WSSD) and threatens every aspect of the Decent Work Agenda.[1] Nine out of ten people living with HIV/AIDS are of working age and have faced further deficits, gaps and exclusions in the form of unemployment and underemployment, poor equality and unproductive jobs, unsafe work and insecure income, deprivation of basic rights, gender disparities, exploitation of migrant workers and child labour, lack of representation and voice, and inadequate protection and solidarity, disability and old age.[2]

4. With this in mind, we express specific concern that

HIV/AIDS dramatically impacts poorer communities where social conditions of poverty increase vulnerability to infection. The epidemic deprives communities of the already scanty resources of households, and dismantles potential community resources of donated labor, knowledge and skills. The epidemic further undermines community family cohesion and the livelihood of millions of workers and their dependents by reducing family income, threatening food security, increasing burden of care, and creating stigma and discrimination, especially for women.

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[1] Cravero, Kathleen of UNAIDS at the panel discussion at the NGO venue for the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on the *Implementation of the Outcome of the WSSD.*, Geneva, 2000.

[2] "Decent Work – Safe work – HIV/AIDS" Decent work - the heart of social progress ILO Report for World Day for safety and Health at Work, Geneva, 2006.

5. Of particular concern, particularly in the context of sub-Saharan Africa, is the lack of attention to and knowledge of rural economies and the sustainability of vitality and viability of the agricultural sector and rural livelihoods. As rural economy has been a core base from which economic development can be sustained, continuing efforts to strengthen rural communities in the face of HIV/AIDS pandemic is critical.

6. Despite this context, success stories and progress recognized by UNAIDS have occurred in many countries.

7. **We urge member states to recognize that**

The approach, called *Human Capacity Development for AIDS Competence*, provides a knowledge management and sharing process that strengthens the development, monitoring and implementation of community programmes through multi-sectoral participation (i.e. UN agencies, media houses, schools, hospitals, industrial manufactures, leading musicians, government representatives, local and municipal authority heads, rural community representatives, people living with HIV/AIDS, medical professional, and others). This process of competencies through use of information, training, communication and innovative tools is to strengthen AIDS-related sociological elements within communities. The approach has been assessed and proven by UNAIDS in its cost-effectiveness and power to lift local confidence which leads to reduction of HIV infection within communities, increased confidence in behaviours, skills, access to services and general improvement in community elements.[3] As a result, better performing AIDS programmes within formal and informal settings lead to improved attitude towards people living with HIV/AIDS and increased involvement in community activities. Through self-assessment, workers can identify how HIV/AIDS relates to their life and families, and how its related issues affect their workplace and their work. In many countries, the process has generated an extremely valuable strategy by targeting existing development-business partnerships.[4]

8. Paul Hunt, Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the right to health, maintains that facilitation of the active and informed participation of individuals and communities should be of priority in the development and implementation of national strategy.[5] Particular effort should stress on the participation of the most vulnerable groups within communities and the cultivation of partnerships in order to respond to a wider range of issues as well as utilise resources more effectively.[6] We share their beliefs that people's participation reflects the right to participate in economic and social development policies which will strengthen current national strategies in both formal and informal employment settings.

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[3] *Evaluation of the UNAIDS/UNITAR AIDS Competence Programme*, UNAIDS, June 2005.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Report to the Commission on Human Rights: Addendum on Mission to Mozambique, 4 January 2005, E/CN.4/2005/51/Add.2

[6] Carolyn Medel-Anonuevo of UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning and Adult Education for Learning Societies, *Koia! Adult & Community Education (ACE) Action*, Issue 2, August 2004.

9. Building on such knowledge and practice, we call for the following urgent enabling conditions:

- **Multi-sectorality: All stakeholders in the world of work must take a more integrated and multi-sectoral approach to address both formal and informal employment sectors within community, to provide an ethical and legal framework to guide workplace policies and programmes and protect the rights of workers, to plan for the social and economic consequences of HIV/AIDS, to eliminate every form of discrimination against and isolation of those living with HIV/AIDS and to help ensure equitable access to prevention, care and treatment.**

- **National Facilitation Team: Human capacity development approach must be integrated into national strategic plans of action to improve communication, monitoring and reporting systems, and accountability to effectively provide communities with resources to share and learn from their experiences. National efforts must include expansion of technical assistance by donor agencies to promote a national facilitation team to sustain knowledge management and translate the learning into organizational practices.**

- **Involvement of vulnerable groups: Local, national, and regional forums for discussion of social protection dialogue for informal workers must include 'vulnerable' populations (i.e. rural poor, rural to urban migrants, people with disabilities and living with HIV/AIDS, and women and youth) to identify vulnerability, coping strategies, unmet needs and access to social protection schemes, including property ownership and inheritance rights of women for social protection, at community, local and national levels.**

- **Financing: Funding and resources must be allocated for human capacity development training to facilitate community ownership and to reveal community strength through facilitation and use of knowledge management assets with innovative processes and tools.**

- **Scaling up: Development agendas that have many ambitious donor-driven initiations, such as sector development and poverty reduction, must be harmonized with "*greater scaling up*" of HIV/AIDS human capacity development programs that focus on social capital, community participation, the development of human skills capacity, the effective use of human resources, and involvement of civil society for complementarity of action, and strengthening social accountability and advocacy systems.**

- **Public-private and tripartism: National efforts must advance tripartite structure and social dialogue to promote human capacity development, the building of partnerships, and the sharing of practices at all levels, including the bilateral and regional levels among the main stakeholders in the world of work. This partnership approach also addresses Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that strengthen the role of private sector information and communication technologies, and is open to every stakeholder in global and local development. ILO, through its co-sponsorship of UNAIDS, must play a meaningful role in developing community ownership for development through their**

provision of leadership and advocacy, which will strengthen the basis for partnerships with the other co-sponsors and organizations of the UN as a whole.

Note:

Statement endorsed and supported by Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace, Salvation Army and UNANIMA International, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

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Statement

1. The family is a common heritage of the world. This heritage has naturally emerged among all peoples as they have advanced along their paths of development and this allows us to depict a basic structure of the family.

2. As the primary element of natural society, the family possesses its own unique rights. It lies at the center of social life and of the reality that societies face. The family develops a "human ecology" by providing a setting where a human being receives his/her first crucial, practical, and intellectual notions and learns how to relate to his/her natural, social, and physical environment. He/she learns how to love and what being loved means and, therefore, concretely, what it means to be a human person.

3. We do not define the obligations and values that the human person lives out in the family in a contract. They stem from the essence of the family itself founded on a stabilizing conjugal pact and structured by the relationships that develop within the family.

4. Family relationships form the archetype of every other community relationship because the family always focuses its attention on the human person as an end and not as a means. The well-being of the human person in the family links closely to the healthy functioning of society.

5. The family's original and essential social subjectivity precedes and forms the foundation for the civil community and the state. Every society formed to serve the good of men and women cannot disregard the central role and of the family in the formation of that society.

The family in the European Union

6. Considering data on the situation of the family from one region of the world as an example, we can observe the specific evolution today of family life in the European Union. Reports, statistics, and considerations concerning the family consistently speak of a crisis.

7. Here are some data:
Decrease of the birth-rate and consequent ageing of the population -- Over the past 25 years the European youth population (under 14 years of age) has decreased by 21.6% and represents only 16.4% of the population.

Marriages -- From 1980 to 2004, in the 25 member states of the European Union, marriages have fallen by 663,600 couples despite the increase of the population by 31.1 million.

Divorce: From 1990 to 2004, in 15 Countries of the EU, more than 10 million marriages have failed involving more than 16 million children[1].

[1] Data of the Institute for Family policies, February 2006.

8. Despite these figures, the family remains close to the hearts of many people. Everywhere in the world, people desire and need family ties as young people repeatedly affirm when surveyed. The problem becomes how to bring about the family that one would want, or that one sees as necessary.

9. Continuing our observation of the European situation, we note that the "sectors" of activity of the European Union do not include a sector on the family preferring to address family issues within individual countries. Over the years, political and economic decisions of the European Union have had strong repercussions on families. We perceive a growing awareness that a lack of family policies and implementation of general policies that neglect the family dimension can exacerbate various forms of social unrest.

10. The EU conferences of Dublin (June 2004) and Vienna (February 2006) have given signs of a new attention to the family.

Proposal for the present day family

11. In the family, men and women respond to the great questions of our time, such as, relationships between a man and a woman and between generations; relationships among cultures, races, religions, the ageing, AIDS and other health issues, the problems of marginalization, etc. As an example in the economic field, the family carries out fundamental societal functions as consumers and savers and as the place where lifestyles develop. Through children, the family supplies our future workforce. Through civic participation and giving, it strengthens the sense of belonging to the community.

12. Considering these aspects, we propose that the Commission on Social Development carefully consider the perspective of the family in planning development programs at various levels. We urge the commission to involve family representatives when considering issues and decisions affecting areas such as the job market, the environment, education, school services, transportation, and all other fields where the family is naturally involved. Engaging families and family organizations in the study and implementation of a broad range of family-related projects will help ensure that families will not only be considered a recipient of services. They will take an active part in the search for ways to advance the global well-being of society as a whole.

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Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: promoting full employment and decent work for all

Statement submitted by Global Action on Aging, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

* E/CN.5/2007/1.

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Statement

1. **In consideration of the theme: Full Employment and Decent Work for All during the 45th session of the Commission for Social Development, Global Action on Aging urges the Commission on Social Development to take note of the evidence put forward by HelpAge International on social pensions.** This demonstrates how the universal (non contributory) social pension reduces old age poverty, enhances of human rights of the poorest and improves the life chances of vulnerable children in development countries.

2. **We urge that the Commission actively encourage member states to consider this evidence both to extend and establish universal social pension schemes in developing countries. We also urge member states to support global and national mechanisms to finance and implement such schemes. Such action would be a concrete demonstration of their programs to realize the commitments of the 2002 Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing.**

Some points for consideration are

3. **Social Pensions have positive social and economic effects**

With a pension, older people can afford to eat at least one meal a day, access basic services such as credit, health care and water, and invest in income-generating activities and the health and education of dependants. Regular cash in the form of the social pension enables older women and men to support the children in their care orphaned by HIV/AIDS or conflict and emergencies. Social pensions help break the cycle of chronic poverty from one generation to the next.

4. **Social Pensions help reduce extreme poverty and hunger**

Social pensions can contribute to the achievement of this target by reducing the number of people living on less than a dollar a day and directly impacting on their hunger. In South Africa, the pension reduces the number of people living below the poverty line by 5% (2.24 million). In Chile, 55% of recipients of the PASIS social pension have moved from being extremely poor to poor and 45% have moved out of poverty altogether. Social pensions can increase the share of the poorest 5% of the population in national consumption. They increase the income of this group of the population by 100% in Brazil and by 50% in South Africa. The Lesotho social pension, implemented in 2004, is helping recipients buy more nutritious food for themselves and their dependants

5. **Social Pensions contribute to the human-rights agenda**

Social security in old age and other times of vulnerability is a recognized right under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Social pensions support the rights of older people to social security. Social pensions also support the rights of older people to development, recognized in the Political Declaration of the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing 2002. State delivery of entitlements such as the social pension supports good governance and enhances the citizen-state contract. As well as supporting social cohesion and household coping mechanisms, the social pension helps to reduce gender inequality in income and quality of life between older women and men.

6. Social Pensions effectively target aid at minimum cost

In Brazil, pensions reach 5.5 million poor older people at 0.9% of gross domestic product (GDP). A pensioner in the family reduces a household's probability of being poor by 18%. In South Africa, pensions reach 2 million poor older people at 1.4% of GDP. A pensioner in the family reduces a household's probability of being poor by 12.5%.

Social pensions target older women, who are among the poorest and most vulnerable people in developing countries. Social pensions deliver support to children, bringing educational and nutritional benefits.

7. Social pensions improve the life chances of orphans and vulnerable children

In the United Republic of Tanzania, which does not yet have a social pension, recent studies show that out of 146,000 children orphaned by HIV/AIDS, only 1,000 attended secondary school, because their grandparents could not afford the fees. However, in Zambia, a pilot cash-transfer scheme which reaches older people caring for orphans has improved school attendance. Similarly in rural Brazil, pensions are associated with increased school enrolment, particularly of girls aged 12-14. In South Africa, girls living in a household with an older woman who receives a pension are 3-4 cm taller than girls in households with older women who do not receive a pension.

8. Social pensions are feasible and affordable

The cost of delivering universal benefits is not beyond the means of resource-poor countries. For example, the cost of implementing large-scale social pension schemes is less than 0.8% of GDP in Namibia and 1.4% in South Africa. Universal provision of social pensions to older people is administratively simpler and less expensive than means-tested benefits. For example administration accounts for only 2-3% of universal social pensions in Botswana and Mauritius.

9. Political will exists to support this agenda in the poorest countries.

In March 2006, the African Union and the Government of Zambia, assisted by HelpAge International, organized a regional conference for East and Southern Africa on cash transfers as a social protection instrument. The resulting "Livingstone Declaration", endorsed by 13 countries, calls for African governments to put together cost national cash transfer plans within three years that are integrated within national development plans and within national budgets, and that development partners can supplement. Specific mention is made of extending and establishing the social pension as well as child and disability grants.

Source : www.helpage.org/Researchandpolicy/Socialprotection